

## Survey—Interest in a Certified Lactation Counselor® Training in Missoula

Community Medical Center and the Missoula City-County Health Department are considering offering a Certified Lactation Counselor program in Missoula this year. We are trying to get an idea of the level of interest before committing to the event. Please let us know if you or others you work with would be likely to join us in this week long educational program.

"The Certified Lactation Counselor®, (CLC) certification is the premier National Certification in Lactation Management for the United States. CLC certification holders have demonstrated competence in the lactation skills, knowledge and attitudes that are essential to helping women in the United States. The course and competencies have been evaluated by the ANCC who has approved as Nursing Skills Competencies.

CLC certification means that a person has received training and competency verification in breastfeeding and human lactation support including assessing the latching and feeding process, providing corrective interventions,, counseling mothers, understanding and applying knowledge of milk production including in special circumstances and other commonly encountered situations. All of this give CLCs a strong foundation with which to help moms and babies.

CLCs are members of the health care team who can provide knowledge and counseling about optimal and sub-optimal breastfeeding. CLCs understand that breastfeeding decisions are made by the mother, who may have values and goals different from the counselor. A counseling approach is used to elicit information and provide appropriate support to the mother and her family. CLCs work as part of the health care team, assuring appropriate referrals and recommendations. CLCs provide breastfeeding counseling and lactation management in:

- Maternity units in hospitals and birth centers.
- Neonatal intensive care units and special care nurseries.
- Outpatient lactation clinics.
- WIC programs.
- Visiting nurse programs.
- Maternal and child health services at the state, county and local level.
- Parenting centers, including military family support centers.
- Physician and midwife office staff.

Research has shown that the education required of CLCs prior to certification is associated with improved breastfeeding outcomes. Working in a variety of settings, including hospitals, WIC agencies, health departments, clinics, health care provider offices, and private practice, nationally certified CLCs are key to the US strategy of increasing breastfeeding rates in our communities, advocating for positive change in societies attitudes and behavior regarding breastfeeding, teaching breastfeeding classes, and assisting mothers to optimally breastfeed. "

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